

Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission
Report - March 2006

CHAPTER 2.1.5.

VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC SEPTICAEMIA

Article 2.1.5.1.

For the purposes of the *Aquatic Code*, viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) means infection with VHS virus (VHSV, synonym: Egtved virus) of the genus *Novirhabdovirus* of the family Rhabdoviridae.

Methods for surveillance and diagnosis are provided in the *Aquatic Manual*.

Article 2.1.5.2.

Susceptible species Scope

The recommendations in this Chapter apply to ~~For the purposes of the *Aquatic Code*, susceptible species for VHS are:~~ rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), grayling (*Thymallus thymallus*), white fish (*Coregonus* spp.), pike (*Esox lucius*), turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*), herring and sprat (*Clupea* spp.), Pacific salmon (*Oncorhynchus* spp.), Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*), Pacific cod (*G. macrocephalus*), haddock (*G. aeglefinus*) and rockling (*Onos mustelus*). These recommendations also apply to any other susceptible species referred to in the *Aquatic Manual* when traded internationally.

~~Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*), Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*), black cod (*Anaplopoma fimbria*), blue whiting (*Micromesistius punctatus*), brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), coho salmon (*O. kisutch*), common dab (*Limanda limanda*), English sole (*Parophrys vetulus*), flounder (*Platichthys flesus*), golden trout (*Salmo gairdneri*), grayling (*Thymallus thymallus*), Greenland halibut (*Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*), haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*), Japanese flounder (*Paralichthys olivaceus*), lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*), lesser argentine (*Argentina sphyraena*), Norway pout (*Trisopterus esmarkii*), Pacific cod (*Gadus macrocephalus*), Pacific hake (*Merluccius productus*), Pacific herring (*Clupea harengus pallasii*), Pacific mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*), Pacific sandlance (*Ammodytes hexapterus*), pike (*Esox lucius*), pilchard (*Sardinops sagax*), plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), poor cod (*Trisopterus minutus*), rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), rockling (*Rhinonemus cimbricus*), sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), shiner perch (*Cymatogaster aggregata*), smelt (*Thaleichthys pacificus*), sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*), surf smelt (*Hypomesus pretiosus pretiosus*), threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*), turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*), sand goby (*Pomatoschistus minutus*), walleye pollock (*Theragra chalcogramma*), whitefish (*Coregonus* sp.) and whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*).~~

~~Suspected cases of natural infection with VHSV in species other than those listed in this Article should be referred immediately to the appropriate OIE Reference Laboratory, whether or not clinical signs are associated with the findings.~~

Article 2.1.5.3.

Commodities

- 1) When authorising importation or transit of the following *commodities*, *Competent Authorities* should not require any VHS related conditions, regardless of the VHS status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment*:
 - a) From the species in Article 2.1.5.2., for any purpose:
 - i) commercially-sterile canned fish;
 - ii) leather made from fish skin.
 - b) The following *commodities* destined for human consumption from the species referred to in Article 2.1.5.2. which have been prepared in such a way as to minimise the likelihood of alternative uses:
 - i) chemically preserved products (e.g. smoked, salted, pickled, marinated, etc.);
 - ii) Heat-treated products (e.g. ready prepared meals, fish oil) that have been heat treated in a manner to ensure the inactivation of the pathogen;
 - iii) eviscerated fish (chilled or frozen) packaged for direct retail trade;
 - iv) fillets or cutlets (chilled or frozen);
 - v) dried eviscerated fish (including air dried, flame dried and sun dried).
 - c) For species other than those in Article 2.1.5.2., all aquatic animal products.

For the *commodities* listed in point 1)b), Member Countries should consider introducing internal measures to prevent the *commodity* being used for any purpose other than for human consumption.

- 2) When authorising importation or transit of the *commodities* of a species referred to in Article 2.1.5.2., other than those listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3., *Competent Authorities* should require the conditions prescribed in Articles 2.1.5.7. to 2.1.5.11. relevant to the VHS status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment*.
- 3) When considering the importation or transit of any live *commodity* of a species not referred to in Article 2.1.5.2. from an *exporting country, zone or compartment* not declared free of VHS, *Competent Authorities* of the *importing country* should conduct an analysis of the risk of introduction, establishment and spread of VHSV and the potential consequences associated with importation of the *commodity*, prior to a decision. The outcome of this assessment should be made available to the exporting country. The exporting country should be informed of the outcome of this assessment.

VHS free country

A country may make a *self-declaration of freedom* from VHS if it meets the conditions in points 1), 2) or 3) below.

If a country shares a zone ~~or compartment~~ with one or more other countries, it can only make a *self-declaration of freedom* from VHS if all the areas covered by the shared water are declared VHS free countries or zones (see Article 2.1.5.5.).

- 1) A country where the ~~susceptible species~~ *species listed in Article 2.1.5.2.* are present but there has never been any observed occurrence of the disease for at least the past 25 years despite conditions that are conducive to its clinical expression, as described in Chapter X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual*, may make a *self-declaration of freedom* from VHS when *basic biosecurity conditions* have been met continuously in the country for at least the past 10 years.

OR

- 2) A country where the last observed occurrence of the disease was within the past 25 years or where the infection status prior to *targeted surveillance* was unknown, for example because of the absence of conditions conducive to clinical expression, as described in Chapter X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual*, may make a *self-declaration of freedom* from VHS when:
 - a) *basic biosecurity conditions* have been met continuously for at least the past 2 years; and
 - b) *targeted surveillance* as described in Chapters 1.1.4. and X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual* has been in place for at least the last 2 years without detection of VHSV.

OR

- 3) A country that has made a *self-declaration of freedom* from VHS but in which the disease is subsequently detected may not make a *self-declaration of freedom* from VHS again until the following conditions have been met:
 - a) on detection of the disease, the affected area was declared an *infected zone* and a *buffer zone* was established; and
 - b) infected populations have been safely destroyed or removed from the *infected zone* by means that minimise the risk of further spread of the disease, and the appropriate *disinfection* procedures (see *Aquatic Manual*) have been completed; and
 - c) *targeted surveillance*, as described in Chapters 1.1.4. and X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual*, has been in place for at least the last 2 years without detection of VHSV.

In the meantime, ~~one or more areas of the remaining territory may be declared free zones,~~
~~part of the non-affected area may be declared a free zone~~ provided that they meet the conditions in point 2) of Article 2.1.5.5.

Article 2.1.5.5.

VHS free zone or free compartment

A *zone* or *compartment* within the *territory* of one or more countries not declared free from VHS may be declared free by the *Competent Authority(ies)* of the country(ies) concerned, if the *zone* or *compartment* meets the conditions referred to in points 1), 2) or 3) below.

If a *zone* or *compartment* extends over more than one country, it can only be declared an VHS free *zone* or *compartment* if all the *Competent Authorities* confirm that the conditions have been met.

- 1) A *zone* or *compartment* where the ~~*susceptible species*~~ ~~species listed in Article 2.1.5.2.~~ are present but there has never been any observed occurrence of the disease for at least the past 25 years despite conditions that are conducive to its clinical expression, as described in Chapter X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual*, may be declared free from VHS when *basic biosecurity conditions* have been met continuously in the *zone* or *compartment* for at least the past 10 years.

OR

- 2) A *zone* or *compartment* where the last observed occurrence of the disease was within the past 25 years or where the infection status prior to *targeted surveillance* was unknown, for example because of the absence of conditions conducive to clinical expression, as described in Chapter X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual*, may be declared free from VHS when:
 - a) *basic biosecurity conditions* have been met continuously for at least the past 2 years; and
 - b) *targeted surveillance* as described in Chapters 1.1.4. and X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual* has been in place for at least the last 2 years without detection of VHSV.

OR

- 3) A *zone* previously declared free from VHS but in which the disease is detected may not be declared free from VHS again until the following conditions have been met:
 - a) on detection of the disease, the affected area was declared an *infected zone* and a *buffer zone* was established; and
 - b) infected populations have been safely destroyed or removed from the *infected zone* by means that minimise the risk of further spread of the disease, and the appropriate *disinfection* procedures (see *Aquatic Manual*) have been completed; and

- c) *targeted surveillance*, as described in Chapters 1.1.4. and X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual*, has been in place for at least the last 2 years without detection of VHSV.

Article 2.1.5.6.

Maintenance of free status

A country, *zone* or *compartment* that is declared free from VHS following the provisions of point 1) of Articles 2.1.5.4. or 2.1.5.5., as relevant, may maintain its status as VHS free provided that *basic biosecurity conditions* are continuously maintained.

A country, *zone* or *compartment* that is declared free from VHS following the provisions of point 2) of Articles 2.1.5.4. or 2.1.5.5., as relevant, may discontinue *targeted surveillance* and maintain its status as VHS free provided that conditions that are conducive to clinical expression of VHS, as described in Chapter X.X.X. of the *Aquatic Manual*, exist and *basic biosecurity conditions* are continuously maintained.

However, for declared free *zones* or *compartments* in infected countries and in all cases where conditions are not conducive to clinical expression of VHS, *targeted surveillance* needs to be continued at a level determined by the *Competent Authority* on the basis of the likelihood of **re**infection.

Article 2.1.5.7.

Importation of live animals from a country, zone or compartment declared free from VHS

When importing live *aquatic animals* of the species referred to in Article 2.1.5.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* declared free from VHS, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should require an *international aquatic animal health certificate* issued by the *Competent Authority* of the *exporting country* or a *certifying official* approved by the *importing country*, certifying that, on the basis of the procedures described in Articles 2.1.5.4. or 2.1.5.5. (as applicable), the place of production of the consignment is a country, *zone* or *compartment* declared free from VHS.

The certificate **shall** ~~should~~ be in accordance with the Model Certificate in Appendix 6.1.1.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3.

Article 2.1.5.8.

Importation of live animals for aquaculture from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from VHS

When importing, for *aquaculture*, *aquatic animals* of the species referred to in Article 2.1.5.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from VHS, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should assess the risk and apply risk mitigation measures such as:

- 1) the consignment is delivered directly into and held in *quarantine* facilities; and
- 2) the imported *aquatic animals* and their first generation progeny are continuously isolated from the local environment; and
- 3) all effluent and waste material are treated in a manner that ensures inactivation of VHSV.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3.

Article 2.1.5.9.

Importation of live animals for processing for human consumption from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from VHS

When importing, for processing for human consumption, *aquatic animals* of the species referred to in Article 2.1.5.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from VHS, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should require that:

- 1) the consignment is delivered directly to and held in *quarantine* facilities for slaughter and processing to one of the products listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3. or other products authorised by the competent authority; and
- 2) all effluent and waste material from the processing are treated in a manner that ensures inactivation of VHSV.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3.

Article 2.1.5.9.bis

Importation of live animals intended for use in animal feed, or for agricultural, industrial or pharmaceutical use from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from VHS

When importing, for use in animal feed, or for agricultural, industrial or pharmaceutical use, *aquatic animals* of the species referred to in Article 2.1.5.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from VHS, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should require:

- 1) the consignment is delivered directly to and held in *quarantine* facilities for slaughter and processing to products authorised by the *Competent Authority*; and
- 2) all effluent and waste material from the processing are treated in a manner that ensures inactivation of VHSV.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3.

Article 2.1.5.10.

Importation of products from a country, zone or compartment declared free from VHS

When importing *aquatic animal products* of the species referred to in Article 2.1.5.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* free from VHS, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should require an *international aquatic animal health certificate* issued by the *Competent Authority* of the *exporting country* or a *certifying official* approved by the *importing country* certifying that, on the basis of the procedures described in Articles 2.1.5.4. or 2.1.5.5. (as applicable), the place of production of the consignment is a country, *zone* or *compartment* declared free from VHS.

The certificate ~~shall~~ should be in accordance with the Model Certificate in Appendix 6.2.1.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3.

Article 2.1.5.11.

Importation of products from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from VHS

When importing *aquatic animal products* of the species referred to in Article 2.1.5.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from VHS, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should assess the risk and apply appropriate risk mitigation measures.

In the case of dead fish, whether eviscerated or uneviscerated, such risk mitigation measures may include:

- 1) the consignment is delivered directly to and held in biosecure/quarantine facilities for processing to one of the products listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3. or other products authorised by the *Competent Authority*; and
- 2) all effluent and waste material are treated in a manner that ensures inactivation of VHSV.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* listed in point 1) of Article 2.1.5.3.